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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
Washington

November 28, 1927

FOREIGN NEWS ON APPLES

CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN APPLE MARKET OUTLOOK IN MID-NOVEMBER

Supplies of continental fruit are expected to remain on a high level throughout November and probably early in December, according to mailed and cabled reports from L.V. Steere, acting American agricultural commissioner at Berlin, and from Edwin Smith, the Department's Fruit Specialist in Europe. According to cables dated November 24, American apples of inferior grade are meeting unfavorable competition from existing European supplies, but there is a fairly good demand for first-class overseas fruit. By the time the Christmas trade is fully under way, the American apples are expected to be in a much stronger position than at present. Cold and disagreeable weather has had some adverse effect upon the demand for apples in north European markets.

Germany

The demand for better quality apples showed some improvement late in October and throughout November, according to a report from Mr. Steere, dated November 14 and amplified by cables of recent date. It still appears, however, that the German market for American apples will not strengthen materially much before Christmas, and the trade seems to be more optimistic as to the outlook for American apples from Christmas on. The appearance and generally good quality of American apples have made them popular with German consumers, and the shortage of good quality continental fruit this year seems likely to cause consumers to look more towards American supplies although high prices may limit sales somewhat. Business in high quality fruit was more brisk in mid-November than a month earlier, but the supplies of medium and poor quality apples have continued to exceed demand, with prices correspondingly weak during most of the month. One factor tending to help the demand for good fruit is the rapidly declining supply of pears, especially good quality table varieties. Fruit dealers in Berlin and other German centers of consumption have continued to increase storage supplies for later consumption, but the peak of storage activity was said to have passed at the time of Mr. Steere's report.

The principal varieties of American apples appearing in German markets in recent weeks were Winesaps, Jonathans, Winter Bananas and King Davids. On the whole, there has been a comparatively good demand, since arrivals have not been excessive. At the same time, supplies of competitive continental fruit have been small, although it is of interest to note that several thousand boxes of Crimean apples found a good market at Hamburg in the latter half of October. This fruit was well packed in boxes similar to standard northwestern boxes, was good in quality and the prices relatively low. The short supplies of Tyrolean fruit also found a ready market. Reports from several continental surplus districts, however, indicated that by the second week of November the bulk of the crop had been shipped. This is especially true in parts of southern Germany, in the Palatinate especially, and also in parts of Bohemia.



Denmark

There were still plenty of cheap, low-grade continental apples on the Copenhagen market on November 23, according to cabled advices of that date from Mr. Smith. The situation there has been aggravated by persistent bad weather. Mr. Steere reports, however, that good quality apples enjoyed a relatively brisk demand during the latter half of October and early November, but that the market for low-grade stock has been unsatisfactory for the past six weeks. Excessive supplies were accumulated around October 1, but the market has gained in strength as those supplies entered consumption. Arrivals, however, continue heavy enough to retard the tendency towards higher price levels. A considerable share of the earlier arrivals of American apples in Copenhagen has been in rather weak condition, with some wastage in northwestern boxed fruit, especially Jonathans. More recent shipments, however, are said to have restored buyers' confidence somewhat, and it is felt that prices will advance with the decline of continental arrivals in the near future. The business in continental pears has already declined to small proportions.

Other countries

Reports from Czechoslovakia state that the volume of export business in apples has decreased sharply since November 1, with the bulk of the crop shipped. The foreign demand for that fruit during the past six weeks has been considered relatively satisfactory on the whole, especially for good quality fruit. October reports from Switzerland also indicate relatively good demand conditions for good quality table apples, and a tendency towards rising prices.

